

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 FEA-01 ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00

CIEP-01 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-07 FPC-01 H-02 INR-07

INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-03 USIA-06

SAM-01 OES-03 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 FRB-03 PA-01

PRS-01 /094 W

----- 061836

R 040029Z AUG 75

FM AMCONSUL PERTH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 846

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL BRISBANE

AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

AMCONSUL SYDNEY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ECON, ENRG, EINV, AS

SUBJECT: WEST AUSTRALIAN EFFORTS TO PROMOTE NORTHWEST SHELF GAS
DEVELOPMENT

REG: A. PERTH 191; B. PERTH 168

1. PREMIER, SIR CHARLES COURT, RETURNED JULY 29 FROM QUICK VISIT TO LONDON AND SAN FRANCISCO, DESCRIBED REF A, DESIGNED TO PROMOTE MASSIVE PROJECT FOR EXPLOITATION NATURAL GAS RESERVES ON NORTHWEST SHELF.

2. CONSULATE HAS LEARNED FROM OFFICIAL STATE AND POLITICAL SOURCES THAT COMPANIES INVOLVED - BURMAH, BP, SHELL AND CAL ASIATIC - HAVE AGREE TO ESTABLISH JOING STUDY GROUP WITH WEST AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT TO STUDY FEASIBILITY OF PROJECT TO DEVELOP, WITHIN SIX MONTHS, A PACKAGE PROPOSAL FOR CONSIDERATION BY FEDERAL
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GOVERNMENT. STUDY GROUP WILL INCLUDE A) EXPERTS OF SHELL AND CA

ASIATIC AS WELL AS BURMAH AS MANAGING PARTNER, B) LOCAL BANKING REPRESENTATIVES AND C) STATE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND BE HEADED BY MINISTERIAL STEERING GROUP OF 1) MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT, MINES AND ENERGY AND 2) HONORARY MINISTER FOR STATE-FEDERAL RELATIONS.

3. DURING OVERSEAS TRIP, SIR CHARLES ENCOURAGED SHELL AND CAL ASIATIC TO TAKE ON A LARGER SHARE OF THE VENTURE SINCE HE FEARS BURMAH MIGHT HAVE DIFFICULTIES IN FINDING NECESSARY FINANCE AND ALSO BECAUSE OF POSSIBILITY OF TAKEOVER BY BP THUS GIVING UK GOVERNMENT CONTROLLING INTEREST, WHICH IN TURN MIGHT BE SUBJECT TO INFLUENCE BY GOA LABOR GOVERNMENT. REPORTEDLY, SHELL AND CAL ASIATIC WILLING TO CONSIDER ACCEPTING LARGER ROLE SUBJECT TO RESULTS OF STUDY. PREMIER ALSO EXPRESSED TO COMPANIES INTEREST IN EXPANDING SCOPE OF GAS PRODUCTION TO INCLUDE WEST AUSTRALIAN PETROLEUM CO (WAPTE) GAS RESERVES SINCE CAL ASIATIC IS A MAJOR PARTNER IN WAPET AND AS MEANS IMPROVING ECONOMIC VIABILITY OF PROJECT. PREMIER ALSO CONSULTED IN LONDON WITH SOME POTENTIAL USERS OF GAS INCLUDING A) CONZINC RIO TINTO IN CONNECTION WITH DIRECT ORE REDUCTION BY HAMERSLEY IRON AND B) ICI IN REGARD TO EVENTUAL PETROCHEMICAL PLANT. PRESUMABLY, SUCH EVENTUAL INDUSTRIAL CONSUMERS WILL BE CONSULTED IN COURSE OF AGREED STUDY.

4. FROM ALL CONSULATE CAN GATHER, GOA, THOUGH INFORMED OF FORMATION OF STUDY GROUP, WILL NOT BE CONSULTED UNTIL STUDY COMPLETED.
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Message Attributes

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